

MBTA COMMUNITIES

ZONING FOR MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN ARLINGTON



& Open Space

Will more development make environmental problems worse?

Arlington is a heavily urbanized area that was built over the centuries without the environmental protections required today. Redevelopment affords the opportunity to make improvements to the existing built environment. This includes serious threats from climate change like stormwater management, flooding, and extreme heat. It also includes quality of life concerns like what neighborhoods in Arlington look and feel like. These important criteria have been considered in the MBTA Communities discussion. As a result, future multi-family development will be concentrated outside of the floodplain. New buildings will need to meet Town stormwater management requirements. Through a mix of requirements and incentives, developments will add street trees, plant gardens, and make other street level improvements with environmental benefits.

Will the overlay zone reduce the amount of public open space in Arlington?

The amount of public open space in Arlington will not change. In fact, the zoning overlay will only affect areas that are already developed. Arlington is a vibrant and diverse community, and public open spaces are an important part of what makes it special. They provide places for people of all ages and abilities to come together, enjoy the outdoors, and connect with nature. The Town's open spaces enjoy certain protections against redevelopment under local zoning and state law. Arlington is committed to protecting these spaces for future generations and will continue to work with residents to ensure that the town remains a livable and sustainable community.

Will adding housing capacity to Arlington negatively affect residents' access to Town open space?

Housing capacity is proposed to be added along Mass Ave and Broadway, Arlington's two major thoroughfares. New residents will be able to enjoy the amenities that the Town provides, including access to open space. Public spaces are maintained for residents' use. The Recreation Department and Department of Planning and Community Development regularly review the number and quality of public open spaces. The Town is committed to ensuring the same quality of life for all residents, new and old.

Will MBTA Communities developments skirt local environmental regulations?

Arlington's MBTA Communities proposal is designed to minimize impacts to sensitive land, and it does not override state or local environmental regulations. New development that may occur within the multi-family district will still need to comply with all applicable state and local provisions. These include our Tree Bylaw, the Wetlands Protection Bylaw, and environmental considerations in the Zoning Bylaw, among others.



For more information about the MBTA Communities process, visit
tinyurl.com/MBTACommunitiesArlington